

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

May 16, 2001

LB 542

CLERK: Mr. President, the first motion I have is with respect to LB 542. It's offered by Senator Wehrbein as Chairman of the Appropriations Committee. The motion is found on page 2053 of the Journal, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Wehrbein, as Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, you're recognized to open.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes. Mr. President, members of the body, I passed out a sheet that says, General Fund vetoes and committee recommended overrides. It has my initials on it. It gives a summary of the veto by the Governor, and then our recommendations on the far right columns. The first one we have up this afternoon is LB 542, which is the UNO CPACS engineering building renovations. Before I say much, I'm going to say that I have been somewhat surprised myself as to the reaction in the rotunda as to the actions of our committee. I...our committee has spent about 60 days, with three to five hours per day, working on the budget. It doesn't make us experts, and it doesn't mean that we know everything there is to know about our budget. But I think it does mean that we've done some hard work on it. We understood there would be vetoes. And I would expect vetoes. What I have been surprised at is the reaction to our recommendation that we override about 25 percent. Admittedly, if we were 80 percent wrong in our recommendations to you two weeks ago, and so that means we're only 20 percent right at this point, so be it. But we've looked at each one of these individual...that we're going to recommend to you to override. You can do what you want. I know many of your arms are probably broken. But I want you to know that we have looked at this very carefully, and that we had a rationale for each one of those areas that we've overridden. I and we and the committee have taken our responsibility very seriously for the budget of the state of Nebraska. And as I said, I'm kind of surprised at the reaction. To me, this is part of the system. The Governor recommends a budget, we look at the budget, we recommend a budget, the Legislature recommends a budget, the Governor looks at it, the Governor makes his vetoes, and in the process, we have a right to override those vetoes. Otherwise, there's really no sense having this session today. We'd just as well